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Rural District of North Westmorland

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1972

Stricklandgate House, P.O. Box 18, Kendal

Telephone Number: Kendal 23502

KENDAL
TITUS WILSON & SON LTD.

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NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area of the Rural District in acres	...	...	...	288,688
Population at 1971 Census	...	...	...	14,779
Population (Registrar-General's mid year estimate)				14,470
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	5,558
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£448,148
Product of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	£4,560
Total Rate in the Pound Levied	...	...	...	71p
of which the County Rate was	...	...	...	59p

The Rural District of North Westmorland lies between the central mountainous mass of the Lake District and the escarpment of the Pennine Chain, and possesses a wide variety of scenery. The main geographical feature of the District is the Eden Valley, a fertile agricultural strip which was once the route of a Roman highway. The River Eden rises in Mallerstang, flows past the market town of Kirkby Stephen to the foothills of the Pennine Range, and thence north-westwards through the ancient Borough of Appleby to its junction with the River Eamont, where it leaves the District.

The country to the north-east rises abruptly to some 2,500 feet, and on the far side the northernmost boundary lies in the desolate area of the Upper Tees Valley. To the south-east of the Eden Valley lies the central upland plateau which extends from Shap to Kirkby Stephen broken only by a few charming wooded valleys and occasional villages. South of this plateau the River Lune flows through pastoral Ravenstonedale into the gorge below Tebay, and the southern boundary of the District is the 2,000 feet high rampart of the great watershed of Westmorland. In the south-west, fells of the Lake District rise to over 3,000 feet, and in the valleys lie the beautiful lakes of Ullswater and Haweswater. These geographical features determine the natural lines of communication and therefore influence the spread of infectious diseases.

The geology of North Westmorland is also very varied. The escarpment of the Pennine Chain in the north and the central upland mass are formed of lower carboniferous limestone, and the Eden Valley lies along the lines of the Pennine Fault. The Cross Fell inlier in the Dufton and Hilton areas is a unique formation containing in miniature most of the Lake District rocks, Skiddaw slates, Borrowdale volcanic rocks, Coniston limestone, the Ashgill series, and Silurian strata above which follows the dominating carboniferous series of the escarpment.

The Vale of Eden is composed mainly of permian sandstone, with St. Bees sandstone in the south, with small beds of red shales, gypsum and magnesium limestone. Above and below the Penrith sandstone lie Brockrams and Breccias, and further west some red conglomerate basement beds are found in the Pooley Bridge area. To the south-west the Borrowdale Volcanic series occur, with ashes and breccias often well bedded and cleaved, and the Silurian strata commence south of Shap. A further interesting feature is the outcrop of the Shap granite intrusion through the Borrowdale series near their junction with the thin Coniston limestone beds. Glacial drift remains at several places and the valley bottoms contain alluvial deposits. These geological characteristics are of great significance in the supervision of water supplies, sewerage and occupational diseases as well as affecting the economics of the District.

The climate is equable in the valleys and invigorating on the fellsides and uplands. The air is generally very clear and there is little mist or fog. Temperature gradient inversions are occasional in the mornings. The average rainfall is 75 inches a year in the Haweswater area but decreases sharply towards the eastern parts of the District: in the upper parts of the Eden Valley it is about 35 inches per year. Snow may be expected for one or two weeks in the late winter.

The District is primarily agricultural in character and many of the small local industries are ancillary to agriculture. There are also the following industries which provide much local employment and bring a measure of prosperity to the villages: Stone quarries and mines for gypsum and barytes, factories for plaster and cement, and railway work.

In addition to these local industries the District receives seasonal tourist business along the main highways, and in the Lake District areas, particularly around Pooley Bridge. The variety of these opportunities for local employment helps to some extent to check the continuing drift from the countryside. Economic security and local prosperity are most important factors in the maintenance of the public health.

STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office.	Whole or Part Time.	Other Offices.
Madge, F. T.	M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health	Part	M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland
Kelly, R. M.	M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.	Chief Public Health Inspector	Part	Surveyor
Ridley, R.	M.A.P.H.I.	Additional Public Health Inspector	Whole	—
Allinson, J. H.	—	Clerk	Part	—
Machell, B. M.	—	Clerk to Medical Officer of Health	Part	Clerk to M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland

Staff Changes.

There were none during the year.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following extracts are made from information supplied by the Registrar-General, with figures for last year for comparison.

Area of the Borough in acres 288,688

	1971	1972
Estimated civilian population (mid year) ..	14,670	14,470
Live Births. Legitimate— males	98	107
females	102	88
Illegitimate— males	6	4
females	3	2
Total	209	201
Crude Rate per 1,000 population	14.2	13.9
Corrected Rate per 1,000 popula-		
tion	15.6	15.7
Birth Rate for England and		
Wales	16.0	14.8
Illegitimate Birth Rate per		
1,000 live births	43	30
Still Births. Legitimate— males	1	2
females	2	—
Illegitimate— males	—	—
females	—	—
Total	3	2
Total (live and still) births ..	212	203
Rate per 1,000 total (live and		
still) births	14	10
Rate for England and Wales ..	12	12
Deaths. males	92	102
females	87	95
Total	179	197
Crude Rate per 1,000 population	12.2	13.6
Corrected Rate per 1,000 popula-		
tion	12.1	12.8
Rate for England and Wales ..	11.6	12.1

	1971	1972
Infantile Deaths (under 1 year)		
Total deaths under 1 year.. ..	5	2
Rate per 1,000 live births	24	10
Rate for England and Wales	18	17
Legitimate	5	2
Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	25	10
Illegitimate	—	—
Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—	—
Neonatal Deaths (under 4 weeks)		
Total neonatal deaths	2	2
Rate per 1,000 live births	10	10
Rate for England and Wales	12	12
Early Neonatal Deaths (under 1 week)		
Total early neonatal deaths	1	1
Rate per 1,000 live births	5	5
Rate for England and Wales	10	10
Perinatal Mortality		
Stillbirths and deaths under 1 week.. .. .	4	3
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	19	15
Rate for England and Wales	22	22
Maternal Mortality		
Total Deaths	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	—	—
Rate for England and Wales	0.17	0.15

Deaths from Certain Causes:—	1971.	1972.
Cancer	32	33
Measles	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	Nil	Nil

The main causes of death were:

Heart Disease	77
Cerebro-vascular disease	37
Cancer	33

COMMENTARY ON THE VITAL STATISTICS.

The published report on the 1971 Census records that 14,779 persons were counted as being present in the Rural District on the night of 25/26th April, 1971. A factual count in an area such as ours is influenced by the time of year when it is made, and be different from the normal resident population. The Registrar-General's mid year estimate for the latter was 14,740.

Birth Rate.

Our birth rate used to be well above that for England and Wales, but in recent years it has been about the national level.

Death Rate.

Even when adjusted to the corrected rate for fair comparison, our local death rate usually runs slightly above the national average.

Perinatal Mortality.

There is often not much difference between the cause of a baby dying in the first week of its life and the cause of a stillbirth. Sometimes it is a matter of chance whether such a baby dies before delivery or after. So we now add the number of stillbirths to the number of babies dying in their first week, and we call it the perinatal mortality: in popular language, the deaths happen around the time of birth.

Mountain Accidents.

Accidents on our mountains are a special hazard in the western parts of our area within the Lake District, and on the wild uplands of the Pennines. A regular toll of death and suffering happens every year. Some of these accidents are preventable, and they mostly affect our visitors.

The inexperienced, the unlucky, and the foolhardy, fall out of crags while rock-climbing, lose themselves in the dark and the mist and the snow. The physically unfit die of exhaustion, exposure and heart diseases.

Someone has to turn out to look for them, and rescue them, and bury them. A magnificent local organization of search and rescue teams has been built up in the District to meet these demands.

A campaign for the prevention of mountain accidents has been organized not only in your District, but also back in the big towns from which our visitors come, and to a wider audience on the radio and television. We hope it may help.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES TABLE

DISEASE	Total	Ages											Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
		-1	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-		
Measles	46	3	6	3	6	4	17	5	1	1	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever ..	7	-	-	-	1	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
TOTAL	54	3	6	3	7	4	18	10	1	1	-	-	1	-

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The general incidence of illness can be assessed by the weekly number of new claims for sickness benefit at our local National Insurance offices. A logarithmic graph of those figures shows a regular seasonal pattern over the years, and any variations are usually worth investigating. The general trend is some measure of local community health.

I am grateful to my colleagues in general practice, and in the hospital service, for their prompt help in notifying infectious diseases. The control of the most serious of these illnesses is one of the most important duties of our department.

The main feature of 1972 was a smallpox alert during late January and early February, following the admission to hospital of a school child from Penrith. A large number of children from North Westmorland had attended the same school, and there were other personal contacts with Penrith.

A prompt and efficient joint control programme was mounted astride the Cumberland and Westmorland border, with vaccination and surveillance of contacts, and other precautionary measures. No further cases were diagnosed.

Our thanks must be gratefully recorded to all the people who rallied round so magnificently to cope with this smallpox alert: the county and county district health departments of both Cumberland and Westmorland, the education authorities, the general practitioners, nurses, and many helpers from the local communities. It was a good omen for the future success and harmony of the new Cumbria County.

On the less dramatic and more local front, there were a few cases of Scarlet fever scattered throughout the year, in the villages near Penrith. A small outbreak of measles during the early summer was mainly confined to the Kirkby Stephen area.

Immunisation against measles is still too recent to assess its results in our own locality. But we are hoping that it will eventually be as successful as the other immunisations against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, smallpox, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis.

Hospital and Ambulance Arrangements for Infectious Diseases.

Hospital accommodation for infectious diseases is provided by the Newcastle Regional Hospital Board at Carlisle.

Smallpox cases will be taken to Langley Park Hospital, Durham City, in ambulances provided by Durham County Council.

Ambulance transport for other cases of infectious disease is provided by the Westmorland County Council.

The Hospital Services.

Your District lies in the area of the Newcastle Regional Hospital Board, and the general hospitals at Carlisle have traditionally served the acute medical and surgical needs of our people, and it seems likely that they will continue to do so.

But some of the villages on the southern fringes of your District are often more conveniently served by the hospitals in Kendal, which are in the area of the Manchester Regional Hospital Board. There are signs of change down there.

The Government's national policy to develop what are to be called District General Hospitals seems likely to mean that the southern end of our area will have to rely more and more on Carlisle and Lancaster, and less on Kendal.

Some people think that Westmorland risks being left rather ill-served if the hospital services concentrate themselves on Lancaster and Carlisle. There is a lot of territory in between, and transport communications are not very easy for out-patients and visitors to get to those hospitals and home again.

The Newcastle Regional Hospital Board have very sensibly recognised these difficulties, especially for the medium- and long-stay hospital needs of elderly people. A new modern hospital was opened early in 1969, with 60 geriatric beds and 15 maternity beds, at Penrith, just over the border of our Rural District.

Furthermore we have the promise of a new-style cottage hospital at Kirkby Stephen. The idea is to build a unit with about ten beds, for certain types of non-acute cases, and acute cases not warranting admission to the distant main hospitals, and under the clinical care of local general practitioners.

Such a small hospital would be linked with a new Health Centre, providing general practitioners, consulting rooms, local authority health services, and maybe some hospital out-patient clinics. The scheme has the support of the Regional Hospital Board, the Westmorland County Council, and the Westmorland Executive Committee, with a proposed site near the Christian Head Hostel.

If this happy idea can survive the upheavals of local government reorganisation and National Health Service reorganisation during the next couple of years, it will set a pioneer example for Westmorland, and bring much comfort and joy to our top end of the Eden Valley.

TUBERCULOSIS TABLE.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respira- tory		Non-res- piratory		Respira- tory		Non-res- piratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
55 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—

The number of tuberculosis patients on the register at the year end were:—

		1971.	1972.
Respiratory	...	7	6
Non-Respiratory	...	4	3
		—	—
		11	9
		—	—

HOUSING.

Under the Housing Acts your Council has a duty to consider the general housing conditions in your District, to ascertain whether any are unfit for human habitation, and to assess the need for further houses. You have powers to deal with unfit houses, powers to provide new houses for all classes, and various powers and duties in the management of your Council's housing estates. Good housing conditions are an integral part of public health.

Present Housing Position.

There are 5,558 inhabited houses on your Rate Books at the end of the Year. With an estimated population of 14,470, the average number of persons per house is 2.6 which is not a high figure. Four houses are legally overcrowded within the strict definition of the housing Act which assumes that living rooms are used also for sleeping purposes and the sexes can be segregated irrespective of sex, health and family relationships.

General Progress of Slum Clearance.

Westmorland as a whole has made very encouraging progress in post-war slum clearance despite all the difficulties of the times. Since the campaign was resumed in 1948 well over 1,400 houses in the County have been dealt with by formal action under the Housing Acts. Most of these will eventually be demolished or converted to trade use, but some of them have been reprieved by their owners undertaking to spend considerable money for comprehensive reconditioning up to modern standards.

In addition to those formal actions there have been a very creditable number of informal schemes for the renovation of substandard houses, either with the aid of improvement grants or entirely by private enterprise. The aim is to save a house whenever possible, but if it cannot be brought up to an acceptable standard of safety, decency and amenity the sooner it is swept away the better.

In your own District good progress continued with slum clearance. Every endeavour was made to persuade owners to recondition them if there seemed any possibility of retaining them as dwellings.

Circular 92/69 required your Council to furnish an estimate of slum clearance for the four years period 1970-1973. The reply was made that we hope to deal with 15 individual unfit houses during 1970, then 20 per year for 1971 and 1972, with 25 in 1973; this will probably leave about a further 40 to cope with between 1974 and

1976. We do not expect that any will be suitably sited for dealing with as clearance areas. I reckon that our postwar achievement of pruning out nearly 400 substandard cottages in a scattered countryside has been a creditable and worthwhile effort, particularly for those which were saved.

For the Record — 1971.

For the purpose of departmental record and statutory returns, I have set out the details of certain slum clearance actions taken during the current year:—

Closing Orders.

Housing Act, 1957. Section 18.

Four closing orders were made during the year, and at 31st December there were altogether 13 houses subject to operative closing orders still occupied. 6 were determined during the year.

Undertakings not to use for Human Habitation.

Housing Act, 1957. Section 16.

No such undertaking was accepted during the year, and at 31st December there was no house in this category still occupied.

Undertakings to Perform Works.

Housing Act, 1957. Section 16.

No such undertakings were accepted during the year.

One such undertaking was outstanding on the Register of Local Land Charges.

Demolition Orders.

Housing Act, 1957. Section 16.

No demolition orders were made during the year. Two demolition orders were outstanding on the Register of Local Land Charges at the year end. None of these houses is still occupied.

Clearance Areas.

Housing Act, 1957. Section 44.

There are no outstanding clearance areas.

General Improvement Areas.

Work has been carried out this year in connection with the declaration of 59 houses at Tebay to be a General Improvement Area.

Improvement Grants.

163 discretionary grants and 29 standard grants were approved during the year, 1,017 houses have been renovated and converted under grants made by your Council. A very worthwhile effort.

House Building Progress.

Since 1948 your Council have built 460 houses and another 405 houses have been put up by private enterprise.

Your Council completed 2 houses during the year. Private enterprise completed 16 in the same period. Conversion to existing houses provided no additional units during this year.

At the year end 6 houses were under construction by your Council and there were 30 by private enterprise.

The Special Needs for Old People.

Both your Council and various charitable organizations have done a lot of good work in providing special houses for the elderly, but a lot more needs doing to keep pace with the increasing proportion of old people in the community.

I suggest that purpose-designed bungalows and ground floor flats are still much needed, with low fittings, handrails, lever door-handles, easy gradient steps, and such-like special aids for the elderly.

I believe that the time has come to provide more groups of semi-dependency type houses for old people with a resident welfare warden available in case of need. Your Council hope to start a scheme in 1974 at Kirkby Stephen.

Housing Management.

Your Council now own 615 occupied houses, situated in widely dispersed sites in your extensive District. The Housing management is largely in the hands of the Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor and every effort is made to inspect the houses at regular intervals to see that the property is kept in good condition.

165 Council houses were built before the 1939-45 war, and many are over 40 years old. The increase in numbers and age of these houses calls for more frequent attention and entails high maintenance costs.

The rents of your Council houses vary from £1.10 to £4.21 and the rateable values from £21 to £52.

Housing Nuisances.

During the year there were 18 Informal Notices served under the Public Health Act, and no Statutory Notice was served.

Rent Qualification Certificates.

Housing Act, 1969.

Two qualification certificates were issued in 1972.

Dangerous Buildings.

No formal action was necessary during the year, but informal action was taken in two cases.

Caravans.

There is now excellent legislation for controlling caravan sites. We were able to work in harmonious and efficient co-operation with both Westmorland County Planning Authority and the Lake District Planning Board for their respective areas within your Rural District. The result of that amicable combination of powers was the adoption of a very high standard of requirements for the siting, equipping and management of caravan sites.

At the end of the year 35 caravan-site licences were in force. They covered a maximum total number of 1,477 caravans permitted on the sites, usually with seasonal restriction to between 1st March and 31st October in each year. These included 5 licences for 5 caravans for permanent habitation, a practice which we discourage unless there are very special reasons for such a substandard choice or necessity.

We still feel the lack of sufficient overnight camping-sites for touring caravans. With our District on the fringe of the National Park, and lying on the main traffic routes which our visitors use, we have to suffer a lot of mess and risk of disease from caravanners who stop overnight on our highway laybys. These places get very fouled for most of the summer.

During the year it was found necessary to prosecute one site operator in respect of contraventions of his licence and for using land without a licence in contravention of Section 1 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960. Fines amounting to £100 were imposed.

Tented Camping.

At the year end one licence was in force under the Public Health Act. It was for 100 tents near the Elysian Fields caravan site near Lowther.

Unlicensed camping sites are limited to occasional use and are mainly on the Ullswater Shore or along the banks of the River Eden during the fishing season. These casual campers cause little nuisance by their improvised sanitary arrangements and refuse disposal, but they take water from polluted becks at their own risk.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Administration

The public water supplies are administered by the Eden Water Board, which was formed in 1963 and took over the statutory water undertaking from your Council, for merger with four others in a wider area of northern Westmorland and southern Cumberland. Your Council has four representations on the Board.

I record my sincere appreciation of the help and liaison maintained by the Engineer and Manager, and all the staff of the Board, in our day to day involvement with specific local problems.

Quantitative Aspects

North Westmorland is fairly well watered, there is a lot of water both above and below ground at certain places in the district. The problems lie in getting it distributed where it is wanted, and making it safe to drink.

I welcome the policy of the Eden Water Board to extend the regional trunk mains to enable the progressive abandonment of inadequate and untreated small local sources of public water supply.

The great natural overground sources from the mountains have now been supplemented by much more accessible local deep boreholes into the abundant underground supplies in the Penrith sandstone layers below the Eden Valley. The borehole at Kirkby Thore has been in service for several years, and a new borehole has recently been sunk at Cliburn.

Distribution

About 93% of houses are now connected to a public water main. The remaining 7% mostly have some sort of a piped supply laid on from individual private systems of wells, springs, becks, or stored rainwater, which may not always yield as much water as the users would like. Many of these can soon be connected to the public water mains.

The Secretary of State requires me to publish the number of houses and population of each of your 52 parishes, to show how many are served by public standpipes, and how many rely on other private arrangements. The figures are set out in a Table on an adjacent page.

Qualitative Aspects

Your Council continues to have the statutory responsibility to check that the public water supplies are sufficient and wholesome. In liaison

PUBLIC WATER DISTRIBUTION, 31.12.72

Parish	No. of Houses in Parish	No. of Houses with water laid on	No. of Houses supplied from Stand Taps	No. of Houses otherwise supplied
Asby	104	102	—	2
Askham	143	143	—	—
Bampton	130	112	—	18
Barton	132	122	—	10
Bolton	100	99	1	—
Brough	264	260	2	2
Brough Sowerby	33	28	—	5
Brougham	86	77	1	8
Cliburn	64	64	—	—
Clifton	110	110	—	—
Colby	33	33	—	—
Crackenthorpe	31	30	—	1
Crosby Garrett	50	50	—	—
Crosby Ravensworth	175	164	—	11
Duften	85	75	—	10
Hartley	55	50	5	—
Hillbeck	8	7	—	1
Hoff	61	61	—	—
Kaber	36	32	—	4
Kings Meaburn	42	42	—	—
Kirkby Stephen	584	584	—	—
Kirkby Thore	261	260	—	1
Long Marton	230	227	—	3
Lowther	126	117	1	8
Mallerstang	50	10	—	40
Martindale	43	12	—	31
Milburn	58	58	—	—
Morland	96	94	1	1
Murton	102	99	2	1
Musgrave	53	51	—	2
Nateby	37	29	2	6
Newbiggin	39	38	—	1
Newby	52	52	—	—
Ormside	37	33	—	4
Orton	215	204	—	11
Ravenstonedale	220	149	—	71
Shap	409	400	—	9
Shap Rural	58	45	—	13
Sleagill	26	26	—	—
Sockbridge & Tirril	118	118	—	—
Soulby	59	58	—	1
Stainmore	104	2*	—	102
Great Strickland	67	67	—	—
Little Strickland	21	21	—	—
Tebay	269	239	—	30
Temple Sowerby	125	125	—	—
Thrimby	13	13	—	—
Waitby	17	16	—	1
Warcop	169	166	—	3
Wharton	9	9	—	—
Winton	71	69	2	—
Yanwath & Eamont Bridge	78	78	—	—
TOTALS ..	5558	5130	17	411

* These do not include the houses supplied from the Stainmore Private Supply.

Note. The majority of Houses in column 5 are provided with piped supplies from private sources.

with the Eden Water Board periodical tests are made on samples of water from consumers' taps, and some of the results are set out in Appendix A of this report.

The Eden Water Board has responsibility for regular stringent medical checks on all the waterworks staff, and for the public health safeguarding of its water gathering grounds.

I reckon that the Eden Water Board has been able to make a most valuable contribution to the public health with the policy of progressively abandoning the old vulnerable untreated small water sources, in favour of supplying all needs from more controlled sources which are constantly efficiently treated and sterilised.

Most of the public water supplies are now treated by chemical sterilisation. No fluoride is added, and the natural fluorine and radio-activity levels are believed to remain low.

The quality of the private water supplies to several hundred houses in North Westmorland is much less satisfactory. Your Council retains some official concern with them, because they have not been transferred to the responsibility of the Water Board.

It is inevitable that the quality of many of these private supplies should suffer from time to time, particularly when wet weather affects surface catchments and shallow wells. They are also vulnerable to foul drainage from new building developments when private rights do not afford them full protection.

Beyond the negative step of condemning and banning a dangerous source of water supply, I can only warn the users that they drink the water at their own risk, that they should have it tested for safety at suitable intervals under their own private arrangements, and that they should boil the water if they are still in doubt.

We continued the excellent liaison with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, for the joint investigation and assessment of applications for grant-aided farm water supply schemes. I have been most grateful for the longstanding co-operation of the Ministry's laboratory and other staff of the regional headquarters at Newcastle upon Tyne. It enables us to co-ordinate the safeguards of public health as well as the milk production and other agricultural interests.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The safe disposal of human sewage and other foul drainage has been recognized for thousands of years as one of the most important ways of protecting the public health. It is still particularly true today in our rural areas, with typhoid and paratyphoid fevers, salmonella and dysentery infections, and many primitive insanitary practices never far from the local scene.

North Westmorland Rural District is served by a series of separate public sewer systems and disposal works which deal with the foul drainage from the villages and more populated parts of other parishes. The remainder of the District has to rely upon individual septic tanks, cesspools, or drainage into watercourses, and some of the more remote houses still retain privies, pails, earth-closets and primitive ways.

Since the end of the war in 1945 your Council have pursued a progressive policy for extending the public sewerage systems to cope with the expanding development round many of our villages, and to improve or replace the existing sewage disposal works which were overloaded or worn out. Somewhat slower has been the bringing of organized public sewerage systems to villages and hamlets where more primitive conditions were becoming dangerous.

Even so, there will probably always be some settlements which cannot easily be linked up to the sewers of a large place, and which do not justify a full-scale system of their own. Many of these can be safely served by group septic tanks where the soil is suitable for absorption of the effluent. Isolated houses must perforce depend on some such individual method of dealing with their foul drainage.

I am indebted to the Engineers for most of the facts set out in the sections of my report which deal with sewage. I also record my appreciation of all their help and co-operation throughout the year on these vital services for safeguarding the public health.

Sewage Disposal Works.

During the post-war period, new sewage disposal works have been built at Brough, Tebay, Shap, Sockbridge, Askham, Temple Sowerby, Ravenstonedale, Bolton, Kirkby Thore, Clifton, Morland and Milburn. Eamont Bridge was also connected to the Penrith sewerage system. These have produced a great improvement in the sewered areas around them.

Other improvements have been made to various works notably at Kirkby Stephen, with the joining up of Hartley and Nateby villages

to that system. But some of the older works need replacement, particularly at Pooley Bridge.

There are many other villages which require the installation of new sewers and modern disposal works: they are beyond improvement of their existing arrangements. Many of these other villages have ancient culverts or some primitive layout of combined surface water drains and piped sewers, but the arrangements are now usually rather insanitary.

Future Sewerage Policy.

Sewerage schemes take a lot longer to prepare and install than water schemes: there are no short cuts towards rapid results. Only long-term planning and careful foresight can help us on towards the village improvements which we should all like to see.

Indeed your Council have worked along these lines for the past twenty-five years. The policy has produced the very creditable results in our townships and major villages. Your Consulting Engineers have already prepared outline plans for future schemes. Our progress has had its ups and downs, with periodical national economy restriction, local limitations with building labour, land acquisitions, practical snags, and the weather. But our long-term planning has provided some elasticity, and the general policy has been seen to pay off in the long run.

This enlightened policy should stand us in good stead during the impending reorganisation of Local Government, but your Council cannot stand still in the meantime. Your own impetus is carrying you forward towards getting on with the next village on your programme. The following more detailed notes show where we had got to at the end of the year.

Morland.

The scheme for new sewers and sewage disposal works for this village, with provision for the future connection to the sewerage systems of the village of Newby was completed during the year.

Milburn.

A scheme for sewerage the village, and the construction of a sewage disposal works, was submitted to the Ministry for approval in October, 1969, and an Inquiry was held in 1970, but various delays ensued. The contractors commenced work in December, 1971, and the work was well advanced by the end of 1972.

Pooley Bridge.

A scheme has been prepared for new sewers and sewage disposal works, which are now urgently needed in this village because the existing plant has become inadequate due to overloading. Not only has this village grown recently with residential development, but all through the summer it is full with thousands of tourists, visitors, motorists, caravans and the people for the Ullswater steamers. Such a popular holiday spot now merits a proper sewage disposal system.

After investigation of alternative methods of disposal, plans were revised for the site of a new disposal works, to serve the existing village sewerage systems plus some necessary extensions to take in recent development. Negotiations were in progress at the year end. I regard this scheme as our top priority, to be commenced before Local Government reorganisation intervenes with consequent inevitable delays.

Other Needs.

Your Council had formulated a tentative list of other villages where they would like to see improved sewerage in due course. The ones that have progressed the furthest at the present time are at Crosby Ravensworth with Maulds Meaburn, and Great Asby. Those schemes have been before you for consideration and work has been started on the design for Warcop. The schemes still outstanding are at Great and Little Strickland, Soulby, Dufton, Long Marton, Kings Meaburn, Cliburn, Hilton, Winton, Hackthorpe and Lowther villages. Their fate will depend upon the impending Local Government reorganisation.

Sockbridge and Tirril, and Shap disposal works are becoming priorities for enlargement, due to overloading by increasing development. Orton sewage works are also becoming inadequate.

Public Conveniences.

Your Council provide public conveniences at Kirkby Stephen, Brough, Tebay, Shap, Pooley Bridge and Orton.

The accommodation is adequate for local requirements, but is insufficient to deal with seasonal motor-coach traffic. This Council therefore provided additional toilet facilities in Kirkby Stephen, which is used as a halting point for a large number of Tyneside-Blackpool vehicles. These new toilets are open during the summer months and especially during the period of the Illuminations, when they are left open all night.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Refuse Collection.

Collections are carried out weekly in all but the less populous areas where fortnightly collections are made.

The nature of the house refuse now collected continues to increase in bulk by reason of the large amount of food, etc. which is now sold in cases, cartons and packets.

An increasing seasonal strain is being placed on this service with the increase in tourism particularly caravan sites which produce considerable quantities of refuse.

The motorway service area (Tebay West) opened during the year and the refuse is collected by the Council on a weekly basis with the operator making other arrangements to dispose of further quantities of refuse. Ideally, a contract removal of refuse would be very beneficial in this case although the relative remoteness of the site militates against this.

Refuse Disposal.

Controlled tipping is the aim of the Council, but it is difficult to obtain sufficient covering material and labour to keep the tips in proper condition. Refuse is disposed of by tipping at four sites, Waitby, Towcett, Melkinthorpe and Kings Meaburn.

Pest Control.

Treatment of the refuse tips and sewage works for the destruction of rats is carried out regularly. The treatment of private houses and other properties is carried out by the Council when requested by the persons responsible, and the costs in these cases are recovered.

I look upon the systematic destruction of rats and mice as a very helpful contribution towards safeguarding the public from all sorts of unpleasant diseases carried by these animals.

FOOD HYGIENE.

General Powers.

Your Council bear most of the statutory responsibility for safeguarding the public from foodborne diseases. The main aim is directed towards securing proper and hygienic conditions for the manufacture, preparation and sale of food. The secondary aim is to trace and localise any outbreaks of disease which may occur in spite of preventive measures.

Precautions against Contamination.

Food hygiene is steadily improving throughout your area. Public opinion is well ahead of the law and most traders are aware of the fact.

The responsibility for safe food does not rest entirely with the trader as the housewife must play her part as well. Quite a lot of strange things happen to food between the shop counter and the dinner plate, and the educational campaign has had to be carried into the home. Foodborne diseases, mild dysenteries and attacks of diarrhoea and vomiting are not infrequent in our homes and among our visitors. I am confident that higher standards will reduce these preventable diseases.

Ice-Cream.

The following premises were registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:—

Manufacture by hot mix, cold mix, storage and sale ...	0
Manufacture by cold mix, storage and sale ...	1
Storage and sale only ...	95

Prepared Meats.

The number of premises on the Register for the preparation of sausages, potted meat, preserved meat, pressed meat, and pickled foods, was 11. Informal notices have been issued regarding certain alterations and improvements.

Food Trade Categories.

The Secretary of State requires me to furnish certain details about the categories of food trade carried on during the year. They are set out in the adjacent table.

Regulation 16 relates to the requirement for providing wash-hand basins, and Regulation 19 relates to the requirements for providing facilities for washing food and equipment used in food businesses.

Food Trade Categories.

Category of Premises	Number	Number fitted to comply with Reg. 16	Number to which Reg. 19 Applies	Number fitted to Comply with Reg. 19
Bakehouses	1	1	1	1
Licensed Hotels and Inns ..	62	62	62	62
Private Hotels	2	2	2	2
Off licence premises	2	2	2	2
Industrial Canteens	1	1	1	1
Clubs	2	2	2	2
Restaurants, Cafes and Snack Bars	20	20	20	20
Fish and Chip Shops	3	3	3	3
Grocers	7	7	7	7
Fishmongers and Greengrocers ..	—	—	—	—
Butchers Shops	11	11	11	11
Wholesale Depots	1	1	1	1
Manufacturers and Bottlers ..	40	40	40	40

Liquid Eggs.

The Liquid Egg (Pasteurization) Regulations, 1966.

There are no egg pasteurization plants in the District.

Poultry Processing.

Although a small amount of poultry dressing goes on at many farms for local retail sale, there is one large-scale establishment run on factory lines where about a quarter of a million birds per year were slaughtered and partially processed before being sent out of the County for completion of processing and wholesale marketing.

The birds comprised chickens, hens and broilers. 10 inspections were made during the year, including some with the Veterinary Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food, and the owner carried out some substantial improvements in cleanliness and food hygiene.

No record was made of the percentage of weight of birds rejected as unfit for human consumption, as inspection was minimal with such a huge throughput and merely partial processing without evisceration.

Milk Registrations.

At the year end there were 34 registered distributors, and three registered dairies which were not dairy farms. No particular difficulties were met, and milk-round vehicles were generally maintained in good condition.

Pathogenic Organisms in Milk.

Biological and other tests on 49 samples taken by various authorities, from sources in our area, continued to be passed to me. I have had no cause during the current year to serve any Notices under the Milk and Dairies Regulations to restrain the sale of milk or the activities of milk-handlers.

Special attention was directed towards the organisms of brucella abortus in the above samples. None were found.

Slaughterhouses.

Your Council adopted a policy of licensing small private slaughterhouses. From the point of view of efficient control and inspection of meat in such a scattered area, this causes many difficulties.

During the year slaughterhouse licences had been operative in respect of the following premises:—

Fletcher Hill, Kirkby Stephen.

Bridge End, Church Brough.

Musgrave Lane, Soulby.

Oak House, Ravenstonedale.

Langton Field, Appleby.

The changing pattern of the meat trade towards retailers buying off the hook, together with the very stringent legal requirements under the hygiene and cruelty regulations, make it doubtful how much longer it will be economic to maintain small private slaughterhouses.

All our local slaughterhouses are kept under very critical review by the Veterinary Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, during the year, as well as by our Public Health Inspectors.

Condemnation of Meat at the Abattoir

Food and Drugs Act, 1955.

The following is a summary of the carcasses inspected and condemned in whole or in part:—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	442	10	1	2141	300
Number inspected ..	442	10	1	2141	300
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci:</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	1	—	1	7	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	5	—	—	26	3
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	1.3	—	100	1.5	1.0
<i>Tuberculosis only:</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	5
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis ..	—	—	—	—	1.07
<i>Cysticercosis:</i>					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

Condemnation of Other Food.

The following other foodstuffs were condemned:—

Ice Cream various	...	...	...	133 bars
Ice Lollies	...	...	...	80
Grapes	...	...	...	10 lbs.
Pears	...	...	...	40 lbs.
Ham	...	...	...	10 lbs.

Method of Disposal of Condemned Food.

The Secretary of State requires me to describe the current methods for the disposal of condemned food. In this district it is by burial.

GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

Your Council employs one Chief Public Health Inspector and one Additional Public Health Inspector.

From 1st September, 1972 the post of Chief Public Health Inspector was combined with that of Surveyor to tide over the period until local government reorganisation on 1st April, 1974.

I record high tribute and appreciation of the work of the public health inspectors throughout the year.

Offensive Trades.

There are no offensive trades in the District.

Factories.

There are 57 factories in your District, all are provided with power. No outworkers were notified to your Council.

The register of factories has recently been completely revised and cross-checking carried out with H.M. Inspector's records.

H.M. Inspector of Factories has been sent details of your Rural District's administration of the relevant sections of the Factory Act, 1961.

No references were made to H.M. Inspector and none were received from her. No prosecutions were required.

Factory Inspections.

Premises	Number of Premises	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	—	—	—	—
Factories not included in (1), in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	57	34	—	—
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	57	34	—	—

No defects were found.

Offices and Shops.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963.

This legislation makes provision for the safety, health and welfare of people employed in these premises. 118 visits were made during the year.

Type of Premises	Registered at year end	Inspected during year	Persons Employed
Offices	12	4	71
Retail Shops	41	20	105
Wholesale Shops and Warehouses ..	—	—	—
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	23	23	170
Fuel storage depots	1	1	3
Totals	77	48	349

Four written notices and no verbal notices were served for contraventions discovered. All were remedied.

Common Lodging Houses.

There are no registered common lodging houses in the area.

Rent Acts.

No certificates were issued during the year and no contraventions regarding rent book entries were found.

Clean Air.

Informal action was taken to minimise the longstanding nuisance of limestone processing north of Shap Village, and complaints of dust at Kirkby Thore.

Compulsory Removals.

Fortunately it was not necessary to take any Court action for the compulsory removal of uncared-for people. Several individuals were visited for consideration during the year. Such cases are extremely distressing to deal with and the course of compulsory removal is reserved to meet the emergencies of a last resort when all other methods of help have failed. Sometimes it is very hard to decide what is really in the best interests of the patient.

Public Mortuary.

Your Council provide and operate a public mortuary at Shap. It is reasonably satisfactory for that limited purpose, and it is not intended for post-mortem examinations.

Your Council also share, with Appleby Council and Westmorland County Council, some premises in Appleby which have long been used as a public mortuary. Your two County District Councils are responsible for operating and maintaining it: the Westmorland County Council merely retain a share in the bricks and mortar.

Public mortuaries should be conducted with a very high standard of cleanliness, decency and reverence.

Laboratory Services.

Laboratory facilities were available at Carlisle for all public health purposes, free of charge to the Local Authority and the patient. This encourages the use of modern diagnostic methods for general practitioners and your Health Department. I am most grateful for this help.

APPENDIX A. **Laboratory Examination of Public Water Supplies.**

Nature of Test			Bleawater Treated	Cliburn Bore Hole	Hayes- water	Kirkby Thore Bore Hole	Maller- stang
Pr. Coli count 37°	..	..	0	0	0	0	0
Faecal Coli/strep	..	..	—	—	—	—	—
Date sampled last	..	..	10.12.72	28.10.69	8.11.72	1.11.73	10.10.72
Character	..	..	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
Reaction	..	..	8.4	7.1	7.4	7.4	7.4
Ammonical Nitrogen	..	..	Trace	Trace	.12	Trace	.02
Albuminoid Nitrogen	..	..	.03	Trace	.03	.01	.04
Total Solids	..	..	40	160	45	365	150
Hardness {	Total	..	20	130	30	270	125
	Carbonate	..	9	80	18	100	115
	Non-Carb...	..	11	50	12	170	10
Chlorides...	..	..	4	15	5	14	7
Nitrates	..	..	.45	1.4	.35	.8	.4
Nitrites	..	..	—	—	—	—	—
O ₂ Absorbed	..	..	.3	.8	.55	.05	1.2
Heavy Metals	..	..	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rainfall 24 hours	..	..	—	—	—	—	—
Date Sampled	..	..	13.10.72	10.9.72	28.9.72	19.5.71	5.9.67
Laboratory	..	..	Newcastle	Newcastle	Newcastle	Newcastle	Newcastle

Chemical analyses results are expressed in parts per million.

